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ABSTRACT

This paper presents findings of a study that identified Oklahoma teachers' perceptions about the knowledge and skills that their principals possess. Data were obtained from a survey of 270 entry-level teachers in Oklahoma and telephone interviews with 9 entry-level teachers. They were asked to identify their principals skills in four performance domains--functional, programmatic, interpersonal, and contextual. The teachers viewed their principals as effective in all essential performance domains. Data indicate that teachers perceived their principals as being most proficient in communication, school law, and leadership. Elementary teachers ranked their principals' skills and knowledge highly, while high school teachers perceived these skills to be the lowest. Teachers in suburban schools ranked their principals most favorably, followed by urban and, finally, rural teachers. Fourteen tables and four figures are included. Contains 55 references. (LMI)

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PRINCIPALS FOR OUR CHANGING SCHOOLS: A STUDY OF ENTRY-YEAR TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF THEIR PRINCIPALS

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PRINCIPALS FOR OUR CHANGING SCHOOLS: A STUDY OF ENTRY-YEAR TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF THEIR PRINCIPALS

Educational reform efforts depend upon adequate leadership at the building level to ensure the success of the reform (English & Hill, 1990; Gainey, 1993; Hersey & Blanchard, 1988; Sergiovanni, 1984). Prior to 1980, reform failed to address school administration and the training and certification of administrators (Achilles, 1984) while research concentrated on various methodologies used by universities in training prospective administrators (Achilles, 1984; Peterson & Finn, 1985). During the latter half of the 1980's most colleges and universities realized that any reform effort "that did not address issues of management and leadership was unlikely to have a lasting impact" (Murphy, 1990, p. 278). In fact, reform without support from administration would easily be diverted and weakened (National Policy Board for Educational Administration, 1990).

The 1987 publication Leaders for America's Schools, sponsored by the University Council for Educational Administration was the first major attempt to identify deficiencies and recommend policy in regard to administrators (Chance, 1992). This report provided the basis for administrator training modules later developed by the National Policy Board. In 1987, the National Policy Board for Educational Administration (NPB) was established to develop a reform agenda for administrator preparation. Two years later, in 1989, the (NPB) released a reform agenda to the public. The document Improving the Preparation of School Administrators: An Agenda for Reform, was a highly controversial report which supported and focused on three main categories in the field of school administration: People/Personnel, Programmatic Concerns and Needs, and Assessment (NPB, 1989).

Educational reform had finally addressed the preparation of school administrators (Chance, 1992).

In 1989, the National Association of Secondary School Principals and the National Association of Elementary School Principals agreed to jointly sponsor the National Commission on the Principalship. This commission was charged with two goals: The reform of administrator preparation programs in the United States, and the plans for a national certification process for administrators (The National Commission for the Principalship, 1990). The basis for this commission comes from "a conviction that preparation programs have failed to move ahead with the times..." and "preparation programs remain essentially unchanged from major reforms of the 1950's..." (National Commission for the Principalship, 1990, p.3). The National Commission for the Principalship defined 21 performance domains for the principalship which represented the scope and responsibility faced by principals as well as the knowledge and skills required to accomplish the various tasks of the job. In 1993, the National Policy Board for Educational Administration published the work Principals For Our Changing Schools: Knowledge and Skill Base. This publication described a knowledge and skill base that encompassed the 21 performance domains developed by the National Commission for the Principalship (1990).

These 21 performance domains focused on the core knowledge and skills for the effective administrator. They were organized into four broad themes: Functional Domains, Programmatic Domains, Interpersonal Domains, and Contextual Domains. Each theme has between four and seven domains which represent the core knowledge and skills for effective school administration (National Policy Board for Educational Administration, 1993).

The Functional Domains constitute the largest area which addresses the organizational processes and techniques that allow the institution to function. These domains incorporate leadership, information collection, problem analysis, judgment, organizational oversight, implementation, and delegation. The Programmatic Domains focus on the scope and framework of the educational program. They include the instructional program, curriculum design, student guidance and development, staff development, measurement and evaluation and resource allocation. The Interpersonal Domains acknowledge the value of human relationships in realizing personal, professional and organizational goals. They include motivating others, sensitivity, oral expression, and written expression. The Contextual Domains reflect the world of ideas and forces in which the school operates. They include philosophical and cultural values, legal and regulatory application, policy and political influences, and public and media relationships (National Policy Board for Educational Administration, 1993, pp 1.1 - 21.23).

Instead of the traditional models which concentrated on conceptually unifying school administration, the (NPB) focused on the changing context and functions of today's educational leaders. "These 21 performance domains, as identified in the (NPB) document, Principals For Our Changing Schools: Knowledge and Skill Base, comprise the most comprehensive description currently available of the core knowledge and skills required for the principalship." (National Policy Board for Educational Administration, 1993, p. xvi).

In the document Action for Excellence (1983), published by the Education Commission of the States, it stated, "In study after study, it has been shown that one key determinate of excellence in public schooling is the leadership of the individual school principal" (p. 29). President Bill Clinton, then Governor of Arkansas, stated in his address

to the Commission that "any reform strategy failing to recognize the need for new sustained leadership in schools will not endure" (1987, p. 1). "Every educational reform report of the 1980's concludes that the United States cannot have excellent schools without excellent leaders. Leadership, therefore, can provide the key leverage to meet successfully major challenges facing the nation's schools" (National Commission for the Principalship, 1990, p. 9). The principal has an important role in the development of a shared vision for his/her school. Principals must facilitate the development of shared visions to create the desired reforms needed in their schools (Deal & Peterson, 1990; Sergiovanni, 1990). "Successful schools not only possess a shared vision, their staffs also share assumptions, operating procedures, and value norms. Achieving this state requires a process of persuasion and example by which the principal moves the group to pursue objectives along a common roadway" (National Commission for the Principalship, 1990, p.12). In empowering faculties, the principal must make certain that each individual of the group is at a state of readiness (Hersey & Blanchard, 1988). For the first year teacher, the relationship between teacher and principal is crucial (Dunn & Dunn, 1983; Gorton, 1991; Harris, 1979).

Wagner (1990) stated "the lack of support for new teachers, the availability of more lucrative and higher status jobs elsewhere... all weaken teaching's claim to be a profession and encourage exit from the occupation and rapid turnover" (p. 342). Historically, the teaching profession has assumed that a teacher's education was largely complete once the initial hurdle of licensure took place (Wagner, 1990). This contrasts with other professions such as nursing, law, medicine, and engineering where an individual's newness in the profession is recognized, and new professionals receive the supervision of more

experienced practitioners in the field (Daresh & Playko, 1992; Fowler, 1992; Gray & Gray, 1985; Taylor, 1986; Wagner, 1990; White, 1990).

Support for new teachers serves as continued training for the professional and as a safeguard for the public. "School principals have a pivotal role in setting the tone for new teacher support, both in assignments... and in staff development" (Wagner, 1990, p. 345). The most important step principals can take to decrease problems incurred by new teachers, however, is to work with them in regard to their role in the organization (Gorton, 1991). Wagner (1990) maintained that "site administrative support is the key" (p. 348).

The relationship between new teachers and their principals is the key component in the success of the new teacher (Ward, 1988). Research in educational leadership indicates that administrators should spend continuous time in developing teachers (Edmunds, 1979; Gorton, 1991; Jacobson, Logsdon & Wiegman, 1973; Raubinger, Sumption & Kamm, 1974; Sergiovanni,1984). If improved teacher performance and professional growth is to be an outcome for all teachers, most importantly new ones, the building principal must provide the instructional leadership to achieve such an outcome (Edmunds, 1979; Goodlad, 1984; Harris, 1979; NREL, 1990; Shoemaker & Fraser, 1981).

THE STUDY

The purpose of this study was to identify the knowledge and skills which comprise the components of the Functional, Programmatic, Interpersonal, and Contextual performance domains in building principals which contribute to the leadership of the building principal as perceived by entry-year teachers. By examining the perceptions of these entry-year teachers with regard to the identified domains as presented in Principals

For Our Changing Schools: Knowledge and Skill Base (1993), this study established answers to the following questions:

1. What interpersonal skills, demonstrated by the building principal, are identified by teachers during their first year of teaching?

2. What contextual skills, demonstrated by the building principal, are identified by teachers during their first year of teaching?

3. What programmatic skills, demonstrated by the building principal, are identified by teachers during their first year of teaching?

4. What functional skills, demonstrated by the building principal, are identified by teachers during their first year of teaching?

POPULATION

The population for this study was entry-year teachers in the state of Oklahoma. The participants were men and women who had recently completed their first year of teaching in public schools. According to information from the Data Section of the Oklahoma State Department of Education (1993), there were 2,296 entry-year teachers in the state of Oklahoma who were completing their first year of teaching during the 1992-93 school year. Of the 2,296 entry-year teachers last year in the state of Oklahoma, 270 were selected by a proportionate random sample based on the federal census definitions of rural, suburban and urban districts. The 270 entry-year teachers were mailed letters and survey instruments addressed to those teachers asking them to participate in this study.

The U.S. Census Bureau (National Center for Education Statistics, 1989), defined a rural school district as an area with a population of 2,500 inhabitants or fewer. A suburban school district is defined as an area with less than 400,000 inhabitants but more

than 25,000 population. And, an urban school district is defined as a central city of a standard metropolitan statistical area (SMSA) with 400,000 or more population.

Ninety entry-year teachers from each census category, totaling 270 entry-year teachers, were included in this study. The ages of the participants ranged from 20-40 years of age. Approximately one third (90) of the participants were elementary teachers, one third (90) were middle school or junior high school teachers, and the remaining third (90) were high school teachers. Approximately one third (90) of the districts were rural, one third (90) were suburban, and the remaining third (90) were from large urban districts.

In addition, the researcher contacted nine (9) eligible participants from across the state by phone and asked them to participate. Three entry-year teachers from each census category of rural, suburban and urban were interviewed. These nine were selected through a proportionate random sample based on the census definitions of rural, suburban and urban, and on school levels of elementary, middle/junior high and high school. Each participating entry-year teacher signed a consent form giving permission to use the information obtained from the interviews.

The participants were contacted and an acceptable time was set for individual interviews. The researcher's questions and the participant's responses were tape recorded in addition to notes taken by the researcher. The tapes were transcripted and analyzed within 24 hours after the interviews so that all nuances of the interview were included in the data.

METHODOLOGY

This study utilized both quantitative and qualitative methods to obtain entry-year teachers' perceptions of knowledge and skills and how the knowledge and skills correlated

to those identified by the National Policy Board for Educational Administration in the document Principals For Our Changing Schools: Knowledge and Skill Base (1993).

Quantitative methodology was employed to gain an understanding of selected entry-year teachers' perceptions as they pertain to building leadership through the use of a questionnaire. A questionnaire was developed using a Likert-type scale to get the entry-year teachers' perceptions of the knowledge and skills of their principal's leadership and how the knowledge and skills correlated to those identified by the National Policy Board for Educational Administration in the document Principals For Our Changing Schools: Knowledge and Skill Base (1993). The questions used to form the questionnaire were derived from the 21 performance domains as documented by the National Policy Board for Educational Administration. These questions were clustered under the four main themes of the performance domains: Functional, Programmatic, Interpersonal and Contextual. Content validity of the questionnaire was established in three steps:

1. The questionnaire was given to three practicing state administrators and University of Oklahoma professors in the field of public school administration to evaluate the question content and construction of the instrument.

2. A panel of five nationally known experts in the field of school administration then evaluated the questionnaire for content and clarity (Van Dalen, 1979). Each panel expert was a representative from an institution of higher education and an expert in education administration.

3. A field test was conducted with a pilot group of six entry-year teachers (Henerson, Morris & Fitz-Gibbon, 1987). They were given the questionnaire and asked to complete it. The six pilot teachers were not part of the sample population used in the final

study. Upon completion of the questionnaire, the researcher reviewed the survey with the entry-year teachers to receive their input on the instrument. They were asked to circle question numbers that were difficult to understand and asked to submit any suggestions to improve the questions. The were also asked if the directions were clear as stated on the questionnaire page.

Qualitative methodology was also employed in this study. Semi-structured interviews were utilized with nine randomly-selected teachers to obtain their perceptions of the knowledge and skills of their principals as leaders and how the knowledge and skills correlated to those identified by the National Policy Board for Educational Administration in the document Principals For Our Changing Schools: Knowledge and Skill Base (1993). The use of semi-structured interviews using open ended questions is useful for allowing participants to answer in their own words to best describe their feelings and perceptions (Borg & Gall, 1989). The questions used in the interview were derived from the 21 performance domains as documented by the National Policy Board for Educational Administration. These questions were clustered under the four main themes of the performance domains: Functional, Programmatic, Interpersonal and Contextual.

Reliability and validity of research is enhanced when multiple sources of data are used to assess the same phenomenon (Borg & Gall, 1989; LeCompte & Goetz, 1982; McCracken, 1988; Selltiz, Wrightsman, & Cook, 1976). Multi-methods, quantitative and qualitative procedures, have been used in this study to identify the components of the Functional, Programmatic, Interpersonal and Contextual performance domains in building principals which contribute to the leadership of the building principal.

According to Goetz and LeCompte (1984), reliability refers to the extent to which studies can be replicated. Thus, in a qualitative study there must be a way of maintaining accuracy in the reporting of data. Bowers and Courtright (1984) stated that there must be a "degree of agreement of a rater with himself when he judges the same object at different times" (p. 116). This is called intra-rater reliability. Intra-rater reliability was used in analyzing the interview data. The data was initially analyzed as soon as all interviews were transcribed. After a period of time had passed, the data was re-analyzed from the very beginning to affirm the results obtained the first time. In re-analyzing the data this way, the researcher established intra-rater reliability.

Split-half reliability was utilized to achieve consistency with quantitative methods (Henerson et al., 1987). This allowed the researcher to obtain the two necessary scores used in figuring the correlation coefficient of reliability in just one administration of the test (p. 148). The use of split-half reliability separates reliability considerations from the effects of learning the instrument or developmental change in the respondents (p. 148). The instrument was designed so that there are actually two instruments in one (p. 149). The questionnaire is initially designed in two halves, each half containing the same number of questions and comparable question content. "The questions must be considered equivalent enough for random distribution to essentially separate forms" (p. 148). The questions are then randomly placed in the single questionnaire so that respondents must answer each content item twice (Henerson et al., 1987).

Triangulation is the technique of using multiple data sources to corroborate evidence and findings. These multiple sources may refer to multiple copies of one type of source such as interviews with participants (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Triangulation of data was

achieved by using two types of data collection. They were: (a) the questionnaires sent to 270 participating entry-year teachers across Oklahoma to get their perceptions of their building principal's leadership, and (b) the semi-structured interviews with nine (9) entry-year teachers. Triangulation, as stated by Lincoln and Guba (1985) is also a mode for improving the probability that findings will be credible. Thus, all entry-year teachers who completed the questionnaire were contributing to this one study on the leadership of the principal.

THE RESULTS

Demographics

From the criteria established, the gender of the respondents included 39 (26%) males and 113 (74%) females (see Figure 1). The age span for the participants was grouped into five categories: (a) 20-25, (b) 26-30, (c) 31-35, (d) 36-40 and (e) 41-45.

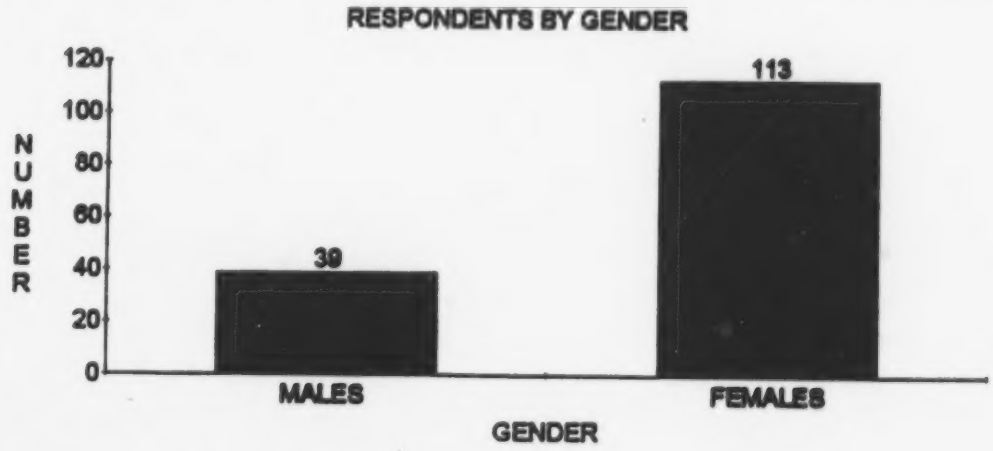

Figure 1. Respondents by gender

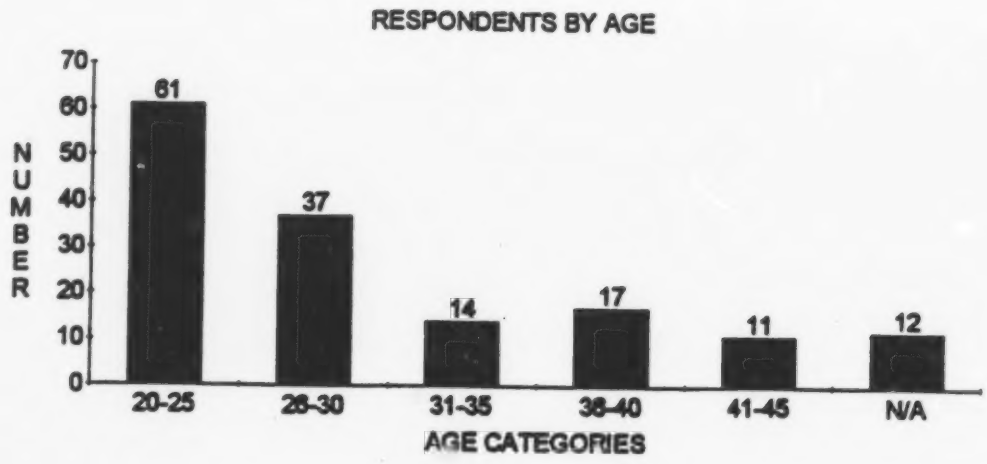

Figure 2. Respondents by age

There were 61 (40%) participants that indicated their ages were in the 20-25 year range. Thirty-seven (24%) participants indicated they were in the 26-30 year range. Fourteen (9%) participants said they were in the 31-35 year range. Seventeen (11%) participants indicated they were in the 36-40 year range, and 11 (7%) participants stated they were in the 41-45 year range group (see Figure 2). Twelve (8%) respondents failed to respond to the age category on the survey questionnaire. The predominant age group for the study was the 20-25 year age group in which most participants placed themselves.

Fifty-two (34%) respondents indicated they were from elementary schools, 52 (34%) from junior high/middle schools and 48 (32%) from high schools (see Figure 3). Fifty-six (37%) of the respondents indicated they were from rural school districts, 52 (34%) from suburban districts and 44 (29%) were from urban districts (see Figure 4). A

total of 270 questionnaires were mailed. The 270 entry-year participants were selected through a proportionate random sample from the total 2,296 entry-year teacher population in Oklahoma for the 1992-93 school year. Ten surveys were returned by the U. S. Postal Service indicating that the entry-year teacher had moved. A return rate of 56% (n = 142) was achieved. Although this rate was lower than desired, it must be remembered that many teachers move, marry, or leave the profession (Chance, 1993).

The data was placed into three school level groupings and three census level groupings to facilitate data analysis. School level groupings consisted of those levels recognized by national principal organizations. They were: (a) elementary, (b) middle school/ junior high, and (c) high school. Elementary and middle level school respondents were the two highest return groups. High school respondents were the smallest return group in the study.

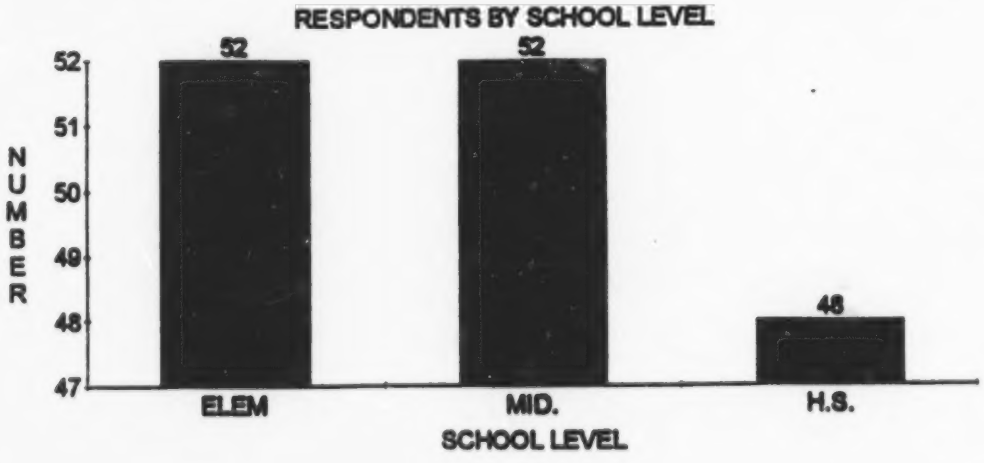

Figure 3. Respondents by school level

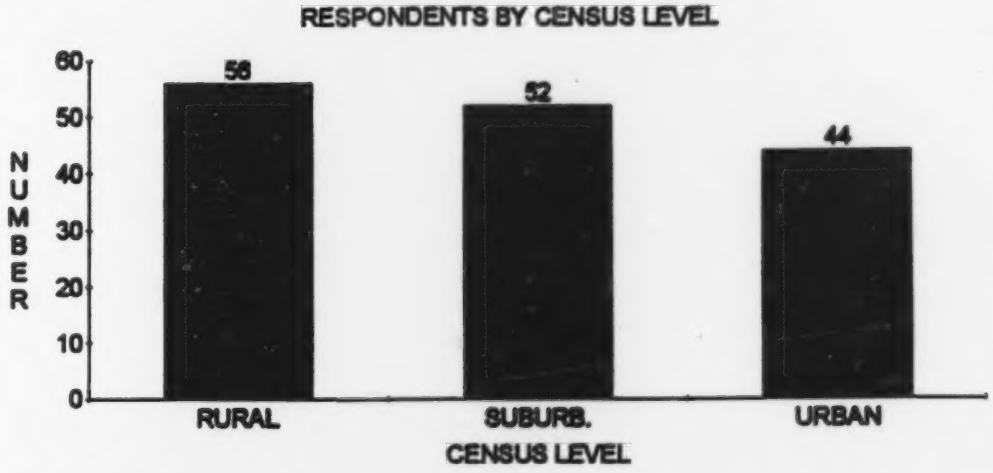

Figure 4. Respondents by census level

The three census level groupings for school districts were those identified by the U.S. Census Bureau by specific populations. They were: (a) rural, (b) suburban, and (c) urban. Table 1 reflects the age levels of respondents in relation to the census size of their school district. Respondents from rural school districts were the largest census return group in the study. Urban respondents were the smallest group returning survey questionnaires in the study.

Table 1

Number of Respondents by Age Group and Census Size

	Age Groups				
	20-25	26-30	31-35	36-40	41-45
Rural	17	14	10	8	3
Suburban	25	17	1	4	4
Urban	19	6	3	5	4

Mean Age: 26

The most frequently marked age group in the study was the 20-25 age group. The mean age group of respondents for all school district sizes was 26-30 years of age. Table 2 reflects the age levels of respondents in relation to their school level. The mean age group of respondents for all school levels was 26-30 years of age.

Table 2

Number of Respondents by Age Group and School Level

	Age Groups				
	20-25	26-30	31-35	36-40	41-45
Elementary	23	13	3	7	4
Middle Level	16	17	6	4	3
High School	22	7	5	6	4

Mean Age: 26

Again, the most frequently marked age group in the study was the 20-25 age group. Forty-three percent (43%) of the respondents marked this category as representative of their age.

The overwhelming majority of respondents for this study were female. Table 3 reflects the gender of all participants in relation to census size of their school district. Table 4 reflects the gender of all participants in relation to their school level.

Table 3

Number of Respondents by Gender and Census Size

	Gender	
	Male	Female
Elementary	6	46
Middle Level	12	40
High School	21	27

Table 4

Number of Respondents by Gender and School Level

	Gender	
	Male	Female
Rural	14	42
Suburban	16	36
Urban	9	35

The predominant gender for both school level and census level categories was female. There were more rural elementary female respondents than any other category in the study.

The 21 Performance Domains

The questionnaire had five columns labeled left to right: 1, Strongly Disagree; 2, Disagree; 3, Neutral; 4, Agree; and 5, Strongly Agree. Participants were asked to read each statement and then circle the number to the right of the statement that best reflected

their perceptions of the knowledge and skills of their building principals based on their first year of teaching.

The data was analyzed as a whole as well as placed into three school level groupings and three census level groupings to facilitate data analysis and answer the research questions in regard to the Functional, Programmatic, Interpersonal and Contextual skills of building principals. Table 5 presents the mean score and rating frequency for all 21 essential performance domains for all principals in this study as reported by all entry-year teacher respondents.

Seven Functional Domains

The seven Functional performance domains netted a cumulative mean score of 3.77 from all respondents. Specifically, leadership received a mean score of 3.85 and information collection was rated at 3.62. Problem analysis scored 3.69 and judgment received a mean score of 3.78. Total respondents rated organizational oversight skills in principals as 3.75 and implementation skills rated as 3.67. The skill of delegation received a mean score of 4.02 by total respondents in this study. Of all the Functional skills and knowledge of the principal, delegation rated the highest (4.02) as perceived by all entry-year teachers in the study. The seven Functional domains all received more ratings of 4 than any other score. The majority of respondents agree that their principals possess Functional skills and knowledge.

Cross-tabulation allowed the researcher a disaggregated view of the data as it pertains to school level. The data was cross-tabulated using the Functional skills and knowledge of the building principal as perceived by entry-year teachers in the specific elementary, middle and high school levels.

Table 5

21 Performance Domains: Mean Scores and Rating Frequency

	Mean Score	1's	2's	3's	4's	5's
Seven Functional Domains:						
Leadership	3.85	1	19	23	55	43
Information Collection	3.62	3	11	50	49	28
Problem Analysis	3.69	3	12	23	52	51
Judgment	3.78	6	16	23	54	42
Organizational Oversight	3.75	2	15	34	55	35
Implementation	3.67	4	16	39	45	37
Delegation	4.02	2	16	16	50	57
Six Programmatic Domains:						
Instruction and Learning Environ.	3.94	5	8	27	51	50
Curriculum Design	3.57	5	18	42	43	33
Student Guidance and Development	3.66	4	21	31	48	37
Staff Development	3.79	3	17	27	53	41
Measurement and Evaluation	3.64	5	16	36	52	32
Resource Allocation	3.57	9	16	38	41	37
Four Interpersonal Domains:						
Motivating Others	3.45	15	17	32	44	33
Interpersonal Sensitivity	3.61	8	25	24	41	43
Oral and Nonverbal Expression	3.92	8	10	18	54	51
Written Expression	3.94	4	14	19	53	51
Four Contextual Domains:						
Philosophical and Cultural Values	3.77	2	9	46	47	37
Legal and Regulatory Applications	4.28	5	6	11	41	78
Policy and Political Influences	3.62	5	18	36	48	34
Public Relations	3.82	6	13	25	54	43

Elementary entry-year respondents rated their building principals' overall Functional skills and knowledge as 3.86 (see Table 6). Specifically, elementary entry-year respondents rated their building principals' leadership skills as 4.02, and appraised information collection skills and knowledge as 3.7. Problem analysis scored 4.02 and judgment received a mean score of 3.8. Elementary entry-year respondents rated organizational oversight skills in principals as 3.88 and implementation skills as 3.68. The skill of delegation received a mean score of 3.94 by all elementary respondents. Elementary respondents agree that their building principals possess high skills and knowledge within the seven Functional domains. Elementary principals were reported to be best at both leadership and problem analysis at this level..

Table 6

Seven Functional Domains by School Level and Mean Score

Seven Functional Domains:	Elementary	Middle Level	High School
Leadership	4.02	3.78	3.73
Information Collection	3.7	3.74	3.42
Problem Analysis	4.02	4.07	3.80
Judgment	3.8	3.67	3.87
Organizational Oversight	3.88	3.70	3.67
Implementation	3.68	3.74	3.60
Delegation	3.94	4.24	3.89
Overall	3.86	3.85	3.71

Again, through cross-tabulation, mean scores from middle level entry-year respondents were analyzed. Middle level entry-year respondents rated their building principals' overall Functional skills and knowledge as 3.85. Specifically, middle level

entry-year respondents rated their building principals' leadership skills as 3.78, and appraised information collection skills and knowledge as 3.74. Problem analysis scored a high 4.07 and judgment received a mean score of 3.67. Middle level entry-year respondents rated organizational oversight skills in principals as 3.7 and implementation skills rated as 3.74. Delegation received a high score of 4.24 by all middle level respondents. Middle level respondents agree their building principals possess a high degree of skills and knowledge in the Functional domains. Middle school principals were reported to be best at problem analysis at this level.

High school entry-year respondents rated their building principals' overall Functional skills and knowledge as 3.71. Specifically, high school entry-year respondents rated their building principals' leadership skills as 3.73, and appraised information collection skills and knowledge as 3.42. Problem analysis scored 3.8 and judgment received a mean score of 3.87. High school entry-year respondents rated organizational oversight skills in principals as 3.67 and implementation skills rated as 3.6. The skill of delegation received a mean score of 3.89 from all high school respondents. High school level respondents rated their principals lower than the other two elementary and middle levels. However, high school entry-year teachers agree that their principals do possess a better than average degree of skills and knowledge in the Functional domains. High school principals were reported to be best at the skill of delegation.

Another cross-tabulation of data afforded the researcher to disaggregate the data according to census size of school/city. Three levels of school size were used in this study: rural, suburban and urban. The data was cross-tabulated using the Functional skills

and knowledge of the building principal as perceived by entry-year teachers in the specific rural, suburban and urban census levels.

Rural entry-year respondents rated their building principals' overall Functional skills and knowledge as 3.67 (see Table 7). Specifically, rural entry-year respondents rated their building principals' leadership skills as 3.54, and appraised information collection skills and knowledge likewise as 3.55. Problem analysis scored a high 3.92 and judgment received a mean score of 3.65. Rural entry-year respondents rated organizational oversight skills in principals as 3.67 and implementation skills as 3.5. The skill of delegation received a mean score of 3.88 by all rural respondents. Rural entry-year respondents reported that their building level principals all possessed a better than average knowledge and skill base in the Functional domains. Specifically, rural principals were rated best at problem analysis.

Table 7

Seven Functional Domains by Census Level and Mean Score

Seven Functional Domains:	Rural	Suburban	Urban
Leadership	3.54	4.12	3.92
Information Collection	3.54	3.75	3.58
Problem Analysis	3.92	4.14	3.79
Judgment	3.65	4.08	3.55
Organizational Oversight	3.67	3.98	3.55
Implementation	3.5	3.92	3.58
Delegation	3.88	4.37	3.74
Overall	3.67	4.05	3.67

Suburban entry-year respondents rated their building principals' overall Functional skills and knowledge a high 4.05. Specifically, suburban entry-year respondents rated their building principals' leadership skills as 4.12, and appraised information collection skills and knowledge as 3.75. Problem analysis scored a high 4.14 and judgment received a mean score of 4.05. Suburban entry-year respondents rated organizational oversight skills in principals as 3.98 and implementation skills as 3.92. Delegation received a high mean score of 4.37 by all suburban respondents. Suburban entry-year respondents all agree that their building principals possess a high degree of skill and knowledge in the Functional domains. Specifically, suburban principals were reported to be best at delegation.

Urban entry-year respondents rated their building principals' overall Functional skills and knowledge as 3.67. Specifically, urban entry-year respondents rated their building principals' leadership skills as 3.92, and appraised information collection skills and knowledge as 3.58. Problem analysis scored 3.79 and judgment received a mean score of 3.55. Urban entry-year respondents rated organizational oversight skills in principals as 3.55 and implementation skills as 3.58. The skill of delegation received a mean score of 3.74 by all urban respondents. Urban entry-year respondents reported their principals as being best in leadership skills and knowledge. Urban respondents agree that their building principals all possess better than average (3.0) skills and knowledge in the seven Functional domains.

Qualitative interviews with nine participants revealed favorable evaluations concerning the Functional skills and knowledge of their principals. Eight of the nine participants all mentioned that their principal delegated to faculty members and included them in the decision process. One participant stated the following concerning delegation

skills: "He always delegates to the faculty." Another stated "She includes teachers in everything," and "My principal empowers us to be involved through committees."

Eight of the nine participants rated their principal as progressive, a risk taker and always available for teachers. Some participants stated the following concerning their principal as a risk taker: "My principal is always willing to try new things, even if it's not popular" and "He encourages us to try new things."

All nine participants stated that their principals were good leaders. Many of them stated that their principals varied in their leadership styles, yet were effective in the way in which they ran the school. One participant stated the following concerning the leadership skills of their principal: "He shares the responsibilities with us." Another stated "He's a very strong leader, even autocratic at times, but it works." A third participant stated "I wouldn't want his job at all," "He does good with all the pressures he deals with," and "He's pretty laid back. He handles problems that would drive me crazy."

Six Programmatic Domains

The six Programmatic performance domains netted a cumulative mean score of 3.70 from all respondents. Building principals are doing a better than average job in the Programmatic skills. Specifically, the instruction and environment skills and knowledge received a mean score of 3.94 (see Table 5). Respondents were very favorable in their ratings when asked about the instructional skills of their principal. Curriculum design was rated at 3.57 and student guidance and development scored 3.66. Although these scores are lower than the other Programmatic scores, the most frequent rating for these two skill domains was a 4. This indicated that while the majority gave high marks, a few entry-year teachers were dissatisfied with their principals' performance in the Programmatic areas.

Staff development received a mean score of 3.79 indicating that principals possess a high degree of skill and knowledge in this area. Measurement and evaluation skills rated 3.64 and resource allocation skills and knowledge rated as 3.57 as reported by entry-year teachers. Of all the Programmatic skills and knowledge of the principal, instruction and learning environment rated the highest (3.94) as perceived by all entry-year teachers. Thus, principals were perceived by entry-year teachers to be instructional leaders.

Through cross-tabulation, the researcher disaggregated the data according to school level. The data were cross-tabulated using the Programmatic skills and knowledge of the building principal, as perceived by entry-year teachers in the specific elementary, middle and high school levels.

Elementary entry-year respondents rated their building principals' overall Programmatic skills and knowledge as 3.8 (see Table 8). A large majority of elementary entry-year teachers were satisfied with their individual building principal's performance in the programmatic domains. The six Programmatic performance domains were each individually rated by entry-year teachers. Instruction and environment received a high mean score of 4.08 from elementary respondents. Curriculum design rated 3.78 and student guidance and development received a 3.74 mean score. Staff development was appraised as 3.84 while measurement and evaluation received a mean score of 3.68. Elementary respondents rated resource allocation also as 3.68 in Programmatic skills and knowledge. None of the individual Programmatic domains were rated under 3.68 by elementary entry-year teachers indicating that a large percent agreed with the survey questions assessing their building principals' skills and knowledge in the programmatic

domains. Elementary entry-year teachers rated their principals higher than the other two school level categories in the study.

Table 8

Six Programmatic Domains by School Level and Mean Score

Six Programmatic Domains:	Elementary	Middle Level	High School
Instruction and Learning Environment	4.08	3.98	3.76
Curriculum Design	3.78	3.57	3.36
Student Guidance and Development	3.74	3.85	3.38
Staff Development	3.84	3.74	3.80
Measurement and Evaluation	3.68	3.61	3.62
Resource Allocation	3.68	3.59	3.44
Overall	3.80	3.72	3.56

Middle level entry-year respondents rated their building principals' overall Programmatic skills and knowledge as 3.72, another good indication that building principals are demonstrating Programmatic skills. The six Programmatic performance domains were each individually rated by entry-year teachers. Instruction and environment received a high mean score of 3.98 from middle level respondents revealing that middle level principals were perceived as instructional leaders. This was the highest rated domain as perceived by middle level respondents. Curriculum design rated 3.57 and student guidance and development received a 3.85 mean score. Staff development was appraised as 3.74 while measurement and evaluation received a mean score of 3.61. Middle level entry-year teachers rated resource allocation as 3.59 in Programmatic skills and knowledge possessed by the building principal. Resource allocations remains the lowest scoring domain in all school levels and census levels. This is consistent with the qualitative interviews. It

concludes that fiscal empowerment and allocation skills of the principal are of the lowest domain exhibited by the building administrator. Middle level entry-year teachers rated their building principals second to the highest in the three school level categories in this study.

High school entry-year respondents rated their building principals' overall Programmatic skills and knowledge as 3.56. This was the lowest rating of the three school level groups. However, the rating of 4 continued to be the most frequent rating given by high school respondents. The six Programmatic performance domains were each individually rated by entry-year teachers. Instruction and environment received a mean score of 3.76 from responding high school entry-year teachers. Curriculum design rated 3.36 and student guidance and development received a 3.38 mean score. Staff development was appraised as 3.8 while measurement and evaluation received a mean score of 3.62. High School respondents rated resource allocation as 3.44 in Programmatic skills and knowledge. High school entry-year teachers perceived their principals to be better at staff development and instruction and learning environment skills and less skilled in the domains of curriculum design and student guidance.

Another cross-tabulation of data afforded the researcher disaggregated data according to census size of school/city. The same three levels of school size were used: rural, suburban and urban. The data was cross-tabulated using the six Programmatic skills and knowledge of the building principal as perceived by entry-year teachers in the specific rural, suburban and urban census levels.

Rural entry-year respondents rated their building principals' overall Programmatic skills and knowledge as 3.57 (see Table 9). Again, the most frequent rating given by entry-year teachers was a 4. This data analysis concludes that while many rural entry-year

teachers gave high ratings to their principals several gave poor marks in regard to the Programmatic skills and knowledge of their principals, thus the mean score was lowered. Rural entry-year teachers rated their principals' Programmatic skills the lowest of the three census groups.

The six Programmatic performance domains were each individually rated by entry-year teachers. Instruction and environment received a mean score of 3.85 from responding rural entry-year teachers. Curriculum design rated 3.58 and student guidance and development received a 3.56 mean score. Staff development was appraised as 3.5 while measurement and evaluation received a mean score of 3.58. Rural entry-year respondents rated resource allocation as 3.37 in Programmatic skills and knowledge.

Table 9

Six Programmatic Domains by Census Level and Mean Score

Six Programmatic Domains:	Rural	Suburban	Urban
Instruction and Learning Environment	3.85	4.16	3.79
Curriculum Design	3.58	3.75	3.34
Student Guidance and Development	3.56	3.86	3.53
Staff Development	3.5	4.02	3.89
Measurement and Evaluation	3.58	3.76	3.55
Resource Allocation	3.37	3.86	3.47
Overall	3.57	3.90	3.60

Suburban entry-year respondents rated their building principals' overall Programmatic skills and knowledge a high 3.9. Suburban entry-year teachers rated their principals' Programmatic skills and knowledge the highest of the three census groups. The six Programmatic performance domains were each individually rated by entry-year

teachers. Instruction and environment received a high mean score of 4.16 from responding suburban entry-year teachers. This was the highest score of all the Programmatic skills demonstrating that suburban entry-year teachers believed their principals possessed the necessary skills and knowledge in the Programmatic domains. Curriculum design rated 3.75 and student guidance and development received a 3.86 mean score. Staff development was appraised as high at 4.02, again demonstrating that suburban principals are perceived to be well versed in staff development skills. Measurement and evaluation received a mean score of 3.76 while resource allocation rated a higher 3.86 in Programmatic skills and knowledge. Suburban principals are perceived to possess much better resource allocation skills than any other school or census category.

Urban entry-year respondents rated their building principals' overall Programmatic skills and knowledge as 3.6, the second highest rating of the three census categories. The six Programmatic performance domains were each individually rated by entry-year teachers. Instruction and environment received a mean score of 3.79 from responding urban entry-year teachers. Curriculum design rated 3.34 and student guidance and development received a 3.53 mean score. Staff development was appraised as 3.89, the highest rating given by urban respondents regarding the Programmatic skills and knowledge of their principals. Measurement and evaluation received a mean score of 3.55. Urban entry-year respondents rated their building principals' resource allocation skills and knowledge as 3.47. Urban entry-year teachers perceived their principals to possess higher skills in instruction and learning environment and staff development and lower skills in curriculum design and resource allocation.

The interviews with nine participants revealed mixed responses concerning the Programmatic skills and knowledge of their principals. All nine mentioned that each of their principals did what was best for students, even when it was not popular with others. One interview participant stated, "My principal did what he knew was best for the student even when he knew the community would not be happy." Another respondent stated, "My principal was great at focusing us on our mission so that students were always our main goal, not teachers."

There was a varied view on the principal's effect on curriculum design. The nine participants gave various accounts of their principals effect. This ranged from no impact to great influence. One participant stated, "I've not seen any impact on our curriculum here by the principal. We design and deliver it—not him." Yet, another interview participant stated, "She has brought so many new ideas to this school—I don't know where to begin."

Eight of the nine participants rated their principals highly in the area of staff development. Participants stated, "He gave lots of time, advice and input to ensure my success" and "She did an excellent job. I couldn't have asked for a better principal and mentor." A majority of the participants stated that their principals conducted staff development especially for entry-year teachers and new teachers in their buildings.

Four Interpersonal Domains

The four Interpersonal performance domains netted a cumulative mean score of 3.73 from all respondents. This high cumulative score demonstrated that entry-year teachers perceive their building principals to possess higher than average Interpersonal skills. The most common rating given for interpersonal domains by entry-year respondents was a 4 (see Table 5). Motivating others received a mean score of 3.45, the lowest rating

of all the 21 performance domains. Entry-year teachers perceive their building principals to be lacking in motivation skills as compared to the other performance domains. Interpersonal sensitivity was rated at 3.61. Oral and nonverbal expression was appraised by respondents and received a high rating of 3.92. Total respondents rated the written expression skills and knowledge in their principals as 3.94. Of all the Interpersonal performance domains assessed by the respondents about their principals, written expression rated the highest (3.94) . Entry-year teachers perceived their building principals to possess very good skills in communication while lacking in motivation skills.

Through cross-tabulation, the data was disaggregated according to school level. The data was cross-tabulated using the Interpersonal skills and knowledge of the building principal as perceived by entry-year teachers in the specific elementary, middle and high school levels. Elementary entry-year respondents rated their building principals' overall Interpersonal skills and knowledge as 3.78, the highest rating given by respondents of the three school levels (see Table 10).

Table 10

Four Interpersonal Domains by School Level and Mean Score

Four Interpersonal Domains:	Elementary	Middle Level	High School
Motivating Others	3.58	3.48	3.27
Interpersonal Sensitivity	3.56	3.61	3.67
Oral and Nonverbal Expression	3.96	3.89	3.91
Written Expression	4.02	3.85	3.96
Overall	3.78	3.70	3.70

The four Interpersonal performance domains were each individually rated by entry-year teachers. Motivating others received a mean score of 3.58 from elementary respondents. Interpersonal sensitivity rated 3.56. Oral and nonverbal communication skills received a high 3.96 mean score. Elementary entry-year respondents scored the written expression skills and knowledge of their principals a high 4.02. Elementary respondents perceived their principals to possess high skills and knowledge in written, oral and nonverbal expression. Elementary respondents rated their principals lowest in Interpersonal sensitivity.

Middle level entry-year respondents rated their building principals' overall Interpersonal skills and knowledge as 3.70. The four Interpersonal performance domains were each individually rated by entry-year teachers. Motivating others received a mean score of 3.48 from middle level respondents. Interpersonal sensitivity rated 3.61; and oral and nonverbal communication skills received a 3.89 mean score. Middle level entry-year respondents scored the written expression skills and knowledge of their principals as 3.85. Middle level entry-year teachers perceived their building principals to possess a high degree of skill and knowledge in oral, nonverbal and written communication while lacking in motivation skills.

High School entry-year respondents rated their building principals' overall Interpersonal skills and knowledge as 3.70. The four Interpersonal performance domains were each individually rated by entry-year teachers. Motivating others received a mean score of 3.27, the lowest Interpersonal skill rating of all school levels. High school entry-year respondents perceived their building principals to be lacking in motivation skills. Interpersonal sensitivity rated 3.67; and oral and nonverbal communication skills received a

high 3.91 mean score. High school entry-year respondents scored the written expression skills and knowledge of their principals a high 3.96.

The data was examined according to census size of school/city. The same three levels of school size were used: rural, suburban and urban. The data was cross-tabulated using the four Interpersonal performance domains in building principals as perceived by entry-year teachers in the specific rural, suburban and urban census levels.

Rural entry-year respondents rated their building principals' overall Interpersonal skills and knowledge as 3.6 (see Table 11). The four Interpersonal performance domains were each individually rated by entry-year teachers of all census levels. Motivating others received a mean score of 3.19 from rural respondents. Again, motivation skills were perceived to be low according to rural entry-year teachers. Interpersonal sensitivity rated 3.58. Oral and nonverbal communication skills received a 3.69 mean score from rural respondents. Rural entry-year teachers rated the written expression skills and knowledge of their principals a high 3.94.

Table 11

Four Interpersonal Domains by Census Level and Mean Score

Four Interpersonal Domains:	Rural	Suburban	Urban
Motivating Others	3.19	3.82	3.29
Interpersonal Sensitivity	3.58	3.90	3.26
Oral and Nonverbal Expression	3.69	4.25	3.79
Written Expression	3.94	4.18	3.63
Overall	3.60	4.03	3.49

Suburban entry-year respondents rated their building principals' overall Interpersonal skills and knowledge a high 4.03. The most frequent score recorded by entry-year teachers on the questionnaire survey was a 4. The analysis of this data points to the fact that a large majority of suburban entry-year teachers believe their building principals possess Interpersonal skills and knowledge. The four Interpersonal performance domains were each individually rated by entry-year teachers of all census levels. Motivating others received a mean score of 3.82 from suburban respondents. This is the single category where motivating others rated high. Suburban principals were perceived to possess higher motivation skills than any other census or school level category. Interpersonal sensitivity rated 3.9; and oral and nonverbal communication skills received a high 4.25 mean score from suburban respondents. Suburban entry-year teachers rated the written expression skills and knowledge of their principals a high 4.18, indicating that principals do well in these domains.

Urban entry-year respondents rated their building principals' overall Interpersonal skills and knowledge as 3.49. Individually, the four Interpersonal performance domains were rated by entry-year teachers of all census levels. Motivating others received a mean score of 3.29 from urban respondents. Interpersonal sensitivity rated 3.26; and oral and nonverbal communication skills received a 3.79 mean score from urban respondents. All responding urban entry-year teachers rated the written expression skills and knowledge of their principals as 3.63.

The highest rated domain was oral and nonverbal expression and the second highest rating was written expression. Urban responses indicated that principals possess

better than average skills and knowledge in these domains. Urban responses indicated that motivating others was lowest on the ratings of all domains.

Qualitative interviews with nine participants revealed positive responses from participants concerning the Interpersonal skills and knowledge of their principals. Five of the nine participants stated that their principals motivated them to do their best. One participant stated, "She makes me want to be the very best." Another stated "My principal has high expectations and we want to meet those expectations." Another participant stated, "He demands a lot, but that in itself encourages me to be my best." The remaining four rated their principals as average in motivating skills.

All participants stated that their principals were excellent in written and oral communication skills. One interview participant stated, " She is superb, I've never even noticed a typo on any of our memos" and "He's absolutely excellent. I wish I had those skills." Another participant stated, "She's great at all kinds of communication. She even gives us little inspirational quotes on the bottom of our weekly agenda memos."

Four Contextual Domains

The four Contextual performance domains netted a cumulative mean score of 3.87 from all respondents (see Table 5). Philosophical and cultural values received a mean score of 3.77; and legal and regulatory applications were rated at 4.28. Policy and political influences were appraised by respondents and received a rating of 3.62. Total respondents rated the public relations skills and knowledge in their principals as 3.82. Of all the Contextual performance domains assessed by the respondents about their principal, legal and regulatory applications rated the highest (4.28) as perceived by all entry-year teachers.

The highest rated domain was legal and regulatory applications indicating that a large majority of principals have a very good understanding of school law and regulations in the state of Oklahoma and exhibit those skills in their schools. The second highest Contextual rating was public relations indicating that a large majority of building principals possess the necessary skills and knowledge to communicate with their communities and constituents concerning their school, inhabitants and curriculum. The lowest rated Contextual domain was policy and political relations (3.62). Although this was the lowest rated domain of the four, principals displayed this skill enough to their entry-year teachers to receive a majority rating of 4 on the questionnaire indicating that a majority of principals know their policies and understand the politics of their district and state.

Through cross-tabulation, the researcher again disaggregated the data according to school level. The data was cross-tabulated using the Contextual skills and knowledge of the building principal as perceived by entry-year teachers in the specific elementary, middle and high school levels.

Elementary entry-year respondents rated their building principals' overall Contextual skills and knowledge a high 4.02 (see Table 12). The four Contextual performance domains were each individually rated by entry-year teachers. Philosophical and cultural values received a mean score of 3.98 from elementary respondents. Legal and regulatory applications rated a high 4.38. Elementary entry-year teachers appraised the policy and political influential skills and knowledge of their principals as 3.70. Elementary respondents scored the public relations skills and knowledge of their principals with a high mean score of 4.02.

Table 12

Four Contextual Domains by School Level and Mean Score

Four Contextual Domains:	Elementary	Middle Level	High School
Philosophical and Cultural Values	3.98	3.70	3.60
Legal and Regulatory Applications	4.38	4.33	4.13
Policy and Political Influences	3.70	3.72	3.44
Public Relations	4.02	3.83	3.58
Overall	4.02	3.90	3.69

The elementary level entry-year respondents rated Contextual domains at the very top of the list. With an overall average rating of 4.02, none of the four Contextual domains rated under 3.7 indicating that elementary principals manifest a very good knowledge of Contextual skills. Elementary principals rate very high in legal and regulatory skills and public relation skills as well as demonstrating a high knowledge base in philosophy and politics.

Middle level entry-year respondents rated their building principals' overall Contextual skills and knowledge as 3.9. The four Contextual performance domains were each individually rated by entry-year teachers. Philosophical and cultural values received a mean score of 3.7 from middle level respondents. Legal and regulatory applications rated a high 4.33. Middle level entry-year teachers appraised the policy and political influential skills and knowledge of their principals as 3.72. Middle level entry-year teachers scored the public relations skills and knowledge of their principals with a mean score of 3.83.

Middle level principals rated highest in legal and regulatory skills indicating that they exhibited a thorough knowledge of school law in Oklahoma. The second highest domain

was public relations. Middle level principals were very good at communicating with the public and promoting their schools to their constituents. Philosophical and political skills rated high with the most frequent score being a 4. This data indicated that middle level principals possessed better than average knowledge and skills in these two domains as well.

High school entry-year respondents rated their building principals' overall Contextual skills and knowledge as 3.69. Again, the four Contextual performance domains were each individually rated by entry-year teachers. Philosophical and cultural values received a mean score of 3.6 from high school respondents. Legal and regulatory applications rated a high 4.13. High school entry-year teachers appraised the policy and political influential skills and knowledge of their principals as 3.44. High school respondents scored the public relations skills and knowledge of their principals with a mean score of 3.58.

High school entry-year teacher responses indicated that their building principals displayed a very good knowledge of school law and regulations in the state of Oklahoma. The second highest rating domain for high school principals was Philosophical and cultural values. This data revealed that high school principals most frequently received a rating of 4 in the survey. A large majority of high school principals understand and exhibit skills in philosophical and cultural decisions. The lowest rating Contextual domain for high school principals was policy and political influences (3.44). The most frequent rating in this domain by high school entry-year teachers was 4. This indicates that a large majority of high school principals possess knowledge and skills in policy and understand the political culture in their district.

The data was reviewed according to census size of school/city. The same three levels of school size were used: rural, suburban and urban. The data was cross-tabulated using the four Contextual performance domains in building principals as perceived by entry-year teachers in the specific rural, suburban and urban census categories.

Rural entry-year respondents rated their building principals' overall Contextual skills and knowledge as 3.82 (see Table 13). The four Contextual performance domains were each individually rated by entry-year teachers of all census levels. Philosophical and cultural values received a mean score of 3.62 from rural respondents. Legal and regulatory applications rated a high 4.31 and policy and political influences received a 3.73 mean score from rural respondents. Rural entry-year teachers rated the public relations skills and knowledge of their principals as 3.62.

Table 13

Four Contextual Domains by Census Level and Mean Score

Four Contextual Domains:	Rural	Suburban	Urban
Philosophical and Cultural Values	3.62	3.92	3.76
Legal and Regulatory Applications	4.31	4.55	3.89
Policy and Political Influences	3.73	3.67	3.42
Public Relations	3.62	4.00	3.84
Overall	3.82	4.03	3.73

The highest Contextual domain rating from rural entry-year teachers was legal and regulatory applications indicating that rural principals possess a thorough knowledge and understanding of Oklahoma school law. The second highest rating was policy and politics revealing that rural principals are in tune with the political climate of their district and

community and understand their district policies. Public relations and philosophical and cultural values both rated at 3.62 with the most frequent rating given by rural respondents being 4. This data indicated that rural principals possess better than average knowledge and skills in these two domains.

Suburban entry-year respondents rated their building principals' overall Contextual skills and knowledge a high 4.03. The four Contextual performance domains were each individually rated by entry-year teachers of all census levels. Philosophical and cultural values received a mean score of 3.92 from suburban respondents. Legal and regulatory applications rated a high 4.55 and policy and political influences received a 3.67 mean score from suburban respondents. Suburban entry-year teachers rated the public relations skills and knowledge of their principals as 3.84.

Suburban entry-year teachers rated their principals at the top of the list in Contextual domains. The highest Contextual domain rating from suburban entry-year teachers was legal and regulatory applications (4.55) indicating that suburban principals possess a very high knowledge and understanding of Oklahoma school law. The second highest rating was public relations (4.0) revealing that suburban principals know how to promote their schools to the community and consistently exhibit these skills. Policy and politics rated the lowest (3.67) of the Contextual domains. However, respondents' scores indicated that a large majority of suburban principals are in tune with the political climate of their district and community and understand their district policies.

Urban entry-year respondents rated their building principals' overall Contextual skills and knowledge as 3.73. The four Contextual performance domains were each individually rated by entry-year teachers of all census levels. Philosophical and cultural values received

a mean score of 3.76 from urban respondents. Legal and regulatory applications rated 3.89 and policy and political influences received a 3.42 mean score from urban respondents. Urban entry-year teachers rated the public relations skills and knowledge of their principals as 3.84.

Responses indicated that urban principals possessed a thorough knowledge of school law and regulations in the state of Oklahoma. The second highest Contextual domain for urban principals was public relations. This data indicated that urban principals are very good at promoting their schools to their communities and to the general public. The lowest Contextual rating for urban principals was policy and political influence (3.42). However, the most frequent rating given by urban entry-year teachers concerning this domain was a 4 indicating that urban principals understand the political climate of their district and community.

Interviews with nine participants revealed that their principals possessed Contextual skills and knowledge. All participants stated that their principals were the very best at public relations. One participant stated, "My principal does a wonderful job in this area" and "He's the very best at PR, he's like a salesman on the move." One participant even stated "She's just like a politician... always working it."

The results from this study indicated that public school principals in the state of Oklahoma possess better than average (higher than a rating of 3.0) skills and knowledge in the 21 performance domains as described by the National Policy Board for Educational Administration (1993). Suburban entry-year teachers rated their principals better than a 3.5 on all 21 performance domains and rated half (10) of the 21 performance domains

better than 4.0. It can be concluded that suburban entry-year teachers perceive their principals as highly skilled and knowledgeable in the 21 essential performance domains.

Rural entry-year teachers rated their principals better than a 3.5 on 20 of the 21 performance domains; the single low domain, motivating others, received a 3.19. Only one domain, legal and regulatory applications, received a better than 4.0 rating. Rural principals are perceived by their entry-year teachers to be highly skilled and knowledgeable in 20 of the 21 performance domains. Urban entry-year teachers rated their principals better than a 3.5 on 17 of the 21 performance domains. The remaining four domains-curriculum design, motivating others, interpersonal sensitivity and resource allocation-received scores between 3.26 and 3.47. None of the performance domains rated higher than a 4.0 for urban principals. It can be concluded that urban principals exhibited fewer skills in the domains than did suburban and rural principals.

Cumulatively, principals were rated favorably by their entry-year teachers with scores ranging from the lowest score, 3.45 - motivating others, to the highest score, 4.28 - legal and regulatory applications. Of all 21 performance domains, only one domain, motivating others, rated under 3.5. The remaining 20 performance domains all received cumulative ratings of 3.5 or better.

SUMMARY OF THE RESULTS

The data gathered from the questionnaires and interviews of entry-year teachers in this study can be most effectively summarized by reflecting on each of the four research questions in this study.

1. What Interpersonal skills, demonstrated by the building principal, are identified by teachers during their first year of teaching?

Responses from all entry-year teachers (100%) revealed that their building principals possessed better than average (higher than a neutral score of 3.0) Interpersonal skills and knowledge. The four Interpersonal performance domains netted a cumulative mean score of 3.73 from all respondents. The most frequent rating given for Interpersonal domains by all entry-year teachers was a 4.

Cross-tabulated data analysis indicated that specific school and census level examinations revealed the same results. Elementary respondents gave the highest level cumulative rating (3.78) with middle level and high school level respondents both rating the Interpersonal skills at 3.70. Census level data analysis demonstrated that suburban respondents rated their principals' Interpersonal skills the highest (4.03) with rural school respondents second (3.60) and urban school respondents third (3.49). Again, the most frequent rating given by all respondents at all levels concerning the Interpersonal domains was a 4. Qualitative interviews with nine participants revealed a majority of positive responses from entry-year teachers concerning the Interpersonal skills and knowledge of their principals. First year teachers identified a large majority of their principals as possessing Interpersonal skills and knowledge.

2. What Contextual skills, demonstrated by the building principal, are identified by teachers during their first year of teaching?

Responses from all entry-year teachers (100%) revealed that their building principals possessed better than average (higher than a neutral score of 3.0) Contextual skills and knowledge. The four Contextual performance domains netted a cumulative mean score of 3.87 from all respondents. The most frequent rating given for Contextual domains by all entry-year teachers was a 4.

Cross-tabulated data analysis indicated that specific school and census level examinations revealed the same results. Elementary respondents gave the highest level cumulative rating (4.02) with middle level respondents second (3.90) and high school level respondents (3.69) third. Census level data analysis demonstrated that suburban respondents rated their principals' Contextual skills the highest (4.03) with rural school respondents second (3.82) and urban school respondents third (3.73). Again, the most frequent rating given by all respondents at all levels concerning the Contextual domains was a 4. Qualitative interviews with nine participants revealed 100% positive responses from entry-year teachers concerning the Contextual skills and knowledge of their principals. First year teachers identified a large majority of their principals as possessing Contextual skills and knowledge.

3. What Programmatic skills, demonstrated by the building principal, are identified by teachers during their first year of teaching?

Responses from all entry-year teachers (100%) revealed that their building principals possessed better than average (higher than a neutral score of 3.0) Programmatic skills and knowledge. The six Programmatic performance domains netted a cumulative mean score of 3.70 from all respondents. The most frequent rating given for Programmatic domains by all entry-year teachers was a 4.

Cross-tabulated data analysis indicated that specific school and census level examinations revealed the same results. Elementary respondents gave the highest level cumulative rating (3.80) with middle level respondents second (3.72) and high school level respondents (3.56) third. Census level data analysis demonstrated that suburban respondents rated their principals' Programmatic skills the highest (3.90) with urban school

respondents second (3.60) and rural school respondents third (3.57). Again, the most frequent rating given by all respondents at all levels concerning the Contextual domains was a 4. Qualitative interviews with nine participants revealed a majority of positive responses from entry-year teachers concerning the Programmatic skills and knowledge of their principals with the exception of curriculum design. Interview participants gave varying views concerning the skills and knowledge of curriculum design regarding their principal. Cumulatively, first year teachers identified a large majority of their principals as possessing Programmatic skills and knowledge.

4. What Functional skills, demonstrated by the building principal, are identified by teachers during their first year of teaching?

Responses from all entry-year teachers (100%) revealed that their building principals possessed better than average (higher than a neutral score of 3.0) Functional skills and knowledge. The seven Functional performance domains netted a cumulative mean score of 3.77 from all respondents. The most frequent rating given for Functional domains by all entry-year teachers was a 4.

Cross-tabulated data analysis indicated that specific school and census level examinations revealed the same results. Elementary respondents gave the highest level cumulative rating (3.86) for Functional domains with middle level respondents second (3.85) and high school level respondents (3.71) rating a close third. Census level data analysis demonstrated that suburban respondents rated their principals' Functional skills the highest (4.05) with rural and urban school respondents both rating their principals' skills and knowledge at 3.67. Again, the most frequent rating given by all respondents at all levels concerning the Functional domains was a 4. Qualitative interviews with nine

participants revealed very positive responses from entry-year teachers concerning the Functional skills and knowledge of their principals. Eight of the nine participants rated their principals' Functional knowledge and skills at the top. First year teachers identified a large majority of their principals as possessing Functional skills and knowledge.

CONCLUSIONS

Studies conducted on the principalship (Bacharach, 1990; Boyan, 1988; Cuban, 1990; Kirst, 1990; Martinko & Gardner, 1984; Metz, 1990; Passow, 1990) and on effective schools (Berman & McLaughlin, 1978; Bossert, 1988; Clark, Lotto, & Astuto, 1984; Edmunds, 1979; Goodlad, 1984; Henderson & Perry, 1981; Lezotte, 1989) have developed profiles of the effective principal. Mentorship research (Gorton, 1991; Griffin & Millies, 1987; Harris, 1979; Wagner, 1990) has also helped establish the relationship between new teachers and success. However, because these earlier studies focused on either case studies, or behaviors and theoretical leadership models, a void was left because the entry-year teacher was not part of that body of research. This study, which has been an in-depth study of public school principals as perceived by entry-year teachers, has provided the data to fill the void left by earlier studies on the leadership of the principal. The perspectives and experiences of these entry-year teachers have been gathered through questionnaire surveys and in-depth interviews with participants from across the state of Oklahoma.

This study supports the research done by the National Policy Board for Educational Administration in their document Principals For Our Changing Schools: Knowledge and Skill Base (1993). Oklahoma public school principals possess and exhibit the 21 essential domains and knowledge base as prescribed by the (NPB). Additionally, this study

corroborated the research that the principal remains one of the most important individuals in the success or failure of a first year teacher (Dwyer et al., 1983; Harris, 1979; Jacobson, 1973; Raubinger et al. 1974; Ryan, 1980; Wagner, 1990).

The study determined that Oklahoma entry-year teachers viewed their principals as effective in all the 21 essential performance domains. Specifically, entry-year teachers perceived their principals best in the areas of legal/regulatory applications, delegation, written expression, oral/nonverbal expression, instruction/learning environment, leadership and public relations. This means that the typical Oklahoma principal concentrates his/her energy on issues related to communication, law and leading the school.

Oklahoma entry-year teachers assessed their principals as very effective in the areas of staff development, implementation, philosophical/cultural values, judgment, organizational oversight, student guidance/development and problem analysis. Oklahoma principals are concerned with the big picture of schooling in their communities and in the state of Oklahoma as well as continued growth of their teachers.

And finally, first year teachers in Oklahoma viewed the majority of their principals as possessing better than average skills in information collection, curriculum design, measurement/evaluation, resource allocation, motivation, policy/political influences and interpersonal sensitivity. Principals in Oklahoma spend less time, compared to the other 14 domains, on moving their schools toward improvement in the area of teacher effectiveness.

The analysis of cross-tabulated and disaggregated data reveals how different teacher populations perceive their principals. In looking at the data, it can be concluded that elementary entry-year teachers perceive their principals' skills and knowledge to be the

highest of the three school levels. Middle level entry-year teachers' perceptions were slightly lower than those of elementary teachers. And, high school entry-year teachers perceived their principals' skills and knowledge the lowest of the three school level categories. Census level data revealed additional differences. Suburban entry-year teachers perceived their principals' skills and knowledge to be the highest of the three census levels. Rural entry-year teachers perceived their principals' skills to be lower than those in suburban districts but higher than those in urban districts. Urban entry-year teachers perceived their principals' skills and knowledge to be the lowest of all census levels. However, it is important once again to note that all principals were perceived to possess better than average (average is a neutral rating of 3.0) skills and knowledge as perceived by all entry-year teachers.

Based on the analysis of the research data, the 21 essential performance domains are listed in order from strongest to weakest to paint the portrait of the Oklahoma public school principal (see Table 14). Oklahoma principals are school law experts. They act in accordance with relevant laws, rules and policies and stay current with new legislation. Principals in Oklahoma assign projects and/or tasks together with the authority and responsibility to accomplish them. They are true professionals and believe in involving others in the work place. Administrators know their audiences and clearly write in the style and manner appropriate. They communicate often with parents, students, teachers and their communities.

Table 14

Rank Order of Performance Domains

Performance Domains	Rank Order
Legal/Regulatory Applications	4.28
Delegation	4.02
Written Expression	3.94
Instruction/Learning Environment	3.94
Oral/Nonverbal Expression	3.92
Leadership	3.85
Public Relations	3.82
Staff Development	3.79
Judgement	3.78
Philosophical/Cultural Values	3.77
Organizational Oversight	3.75
Problem Analysis	3.69
Implementation	3.67
Student Guidance & Development	3.66
Measurement and Evaluation	3.64
Information Collection	3.62
Policy and Political Influences	3.62
Interpersonal Sensitivity	3.62
Curriculum Design	3.57
Resource Allocation	3.57
Motivating Others	3.45

Oklahoma principals believe in the improvement of teaching and learning. And more importantly, they keep this as their priority and mission. They have an educational vision for their school and strive to achieve that vision every day. They know that a positive learning environment is the most crucial element for their school sites. Public school principals are great communicators. They communicate clearly to their staffs and summarize when they make presentations. They know when to speak and when to be quiet. Oklahoma principals are leaders. They set priorities, initiate and maintain direction, set goals, create successes and plan organizational change. Principals are the best salesmen. They foster a sense of unity while enlisting public participation and approval. They know the tricks of the media and can beat them at their own game.

Building administrators believe and foster the need for continuous improvement in the teaching profession. Principals solicit the needs of the professional staff and plan and participate in the development process with teachers. Oklahoma principals are great decision makers. They base their decisions on facts. They stay informed and believe in research. They reach logical conclusions in a timely manner. Principals truly look at the big picture of education. They know what is important to their communities and they also know what students must experience for tomorrow's global economy. Principals take a stand for ethical behavior and cultural plurality. They reflect the customs of yesterday while promoting the standards for tomorrow.

Building administrators know what is going on all around them. They structure their time as well as time for others. The keep all their "irons in the fire." The manage facilities, time schedules, short and long term goals, and make recommendations for tomorrow. Principals know that to solve problems one must look at the cause not the symptom. They

identify possible solutions and believe in shared decision making. They involve others so that others become problem solvers too. Oklahoma principals make things happen. The don't sit and wait. They are proactive and believe in progressive education. They utilize technology, philosophy, methodologies and look for unconventional and alternative approaches to implement their ideas. They don't take "no" for an answer.

Oklahoma principals make sure their schools provide for all the needs of their students. They utilize community organizations and professional services and respond to the student's family needs as well. Site administrators profile their buildings' activities in order to improve. They continuously assess the curriculum, the environment and testing data to make informed decisions about the future of education. Principals relate how state and district policies affect students. They meet in professional organizations and public groups to discuss policy items and implications. They keep students in the forefront and do what is best for them.

Principals know that school can be a place for stress as well as fun. Principals are sensitive toward the needs of others and consider the implications of their actions before they act. They are tactful when dealing with others, especially when others are in an emotionally stressful situation. Oklahoma principals are better than average when it comes to curriculum and money. They know how to implement new curricula and monitor the regular curriculum in order to make changes for the future. Building administrators also monitor and adjust their site budgets based on the needs of their buildings. Oklahoma principals rated the lowest on motivating others. Although they still scored above average (average = 3.0), principals cannot risk losing the energy level of their employees and students. Principals can do more with motivated, happy and energetic teachers.

Oklahoma principals need to take the lead here as well. We must take time to celebrate the successes, share the moments, and renew relationships that foster the motivation for tomorrow.

Although these domains are listed from strongest to weakest, it is noted that the lowest mean score domain was 3.45 with a frequency score of 4. Oklahoma public school principals can and should always strive for improvement. This study revealed that Oklahoma principals are, in fact, exhibiting the essential performance domains with a better than average score. The application of these domains to the role of the principal enhances the linkage of the principal's behaviors and activities to assist entry-year teachers.

The findings of this study make it evident that public school principals in the state of Oklahoma possess the 21 essential performance domains as identified by the National Policy Board for Educational Administration in their document Principals For Our Changing Schools: Knowledge and Skill Base (1993). And, more importantly, this knowledge and skill base is being exhibited to entry-year teachers as principals assist them during their crucial first year and provide the leadership necessary to ensure their success in the teaching profession.

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